MR. P. N. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Secretary to Government*): We were not selling our timber for nominal prices.

MR. S. PIRAVIPERUMAL PILLAI (*Commerce and Industry, South*) : Is the Member aware of the statement made by the Dewan in his address to the Assembly about this matter ; and if so, may I know whether that is correct or this?

MR. P. N. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Secretary to Government*) : I have no information now. I claim notice.

Purchase of Land for Tenmalai Depôt.

347. **MR. S. SUBRAHMANYA KARAYALAR** (*Pattanapuram cum Shencotta*) : Will the Government be pleased to state how many acres of land were purchased for the site for the Tenmalai Forest Depôt and the price paid for the same?

MR. P. N. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Ag. Secretary to Government*): 28·52 acres of land were purchased in 1085 for the Tenmalai Depôt site at a cost of Rs. 3,744-14-6.

Preferential Treatment to Backward Communities in Service.

348. **MR. R. PADMANABHAN** (*Nominated*) : (*a*) Are the Government aware that there are a good many unemployed graduates belonging to the educationally backward communities who are denied entertainment in public service?

(*b*) Will the Government be pleased to state:

(i) whether it is their policy to accord preferential treatment to such backward communities in the matter of entertainment in public service ;

(ii) if so, whether this policy is being strictly followed in the matter of appointments in all departments, especially in the Secretariat and the Account Office ; and

(iii) whether they have recently ruled that seniority among acting hands in the Secretariat and the Account Office should be determined by the date of first entertainment in the service?

(*c*) Has the above rule affected the seniority of acting Ezhava clerks in the Account Office and the Secretariat?

(*d*) Will the Government be pleased to modify the above rule so that it may not stand in the way of according preferential treatment to the backward communities of the State?

MR. K. GEORGE (*Ag. Chief Secretary to Government*) : (*a*) The Government are aware that there are many unemployed graduates in the State, but have no information about their communal distribution.

(*b*) (i) The policy of the Government is that efficiency should be the paramount consideration in recruitment to the public service and that applications for appointments from members of communities which are backward in education should be given favourable treatment if it can be done without sacrifice of efficiency.

(ii) The Government presume that this is being done.

(iii) The answer is in the affirmative.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly